We Claim:

1. A method of affecting microbial activity, said method comprising:

providing an article comprising a solid carrier component; and a volatile antimicrobial composition incorporated therewith, said antimicrobial composition comprising propanoic acid; and a component selected from a C_2-C_5 acid ester, and aldehyde and combinations thereof, providing said composition is absent naphthalene and azulene derivative compounds; and

contacting the vapor of said antimicrobial composition of said article with at least one of a microbe and a food item capable of supporting microbial activity, said composition in an amount sufficient to affect microbial activity.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said food item comprises post-harvest produce, said produce and said article in a container.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein said produce is introduced to a said container at a point along a supply chain for said produce.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein said introduction is selected from a point of harvest, a point of processing, a point of wholesale distribution, a point of retail sale and combinations thereof.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises isobutyl isobutyrate, isoamyl acetate and benzaldehyde.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said carrier component comprises a clay.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said clay comprises a bentonite clay.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said article is in a vapor-permeable enclosure.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein said enclosure is a flexible bag comprising a mesh material.

10. A method of affecting microbial activity, said method comprising providing a composition comprising propanoic acid; and a component selected from a C_2-C_5 acid ester, an aldehyde and combinations thereof, providing said composition is absent naphthalene and azulene derivative compounds; and contacting at least one of a microbe and a substrate capable of supporting microbial activity with said composition, said composition in an amount at least partially sufficient to affect microbial activity.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein a said component is selected from isoamyl acetate, isobutyl isobutyrate, benzaldehyde and combinations thereof.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein said substrate is selected from plant components and articles of manufacture.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein said article is selected from packaging products and articles comprising granules of a solid carrier component.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said carrier component comprises a clay.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein said clay is a bentonite clay.

16. The method of claim 10 wherein said contact is selected from direct contact of said composition and upon at least partial vaporization of said composition.

17. A method of affecting microbial activity, said method comprising providing a composition comprising propanoic acid and a component selected from isoamyl acetate, isobutyl isobutyrate, benzaldehyde and combinations thereof, providing said composition is absent naphthalene and azulene derivative compounds; and contacting at least one of a microbe and a substrate capable of supporting microbial activity with said composition, said composition in an amount at least partially sufficient to affect microbial activity.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said substrate is selected from plant components and articles of manufacture.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein said article is selected from packaging products and articles comprising granules of a solid carrier component.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein said carrier component comprises a clay.